From: Ricardo Arias
To: Eligio Lara
Subject: Fw: **RESOLVED VKFR** Pedro Mezquita Novoa**Michoacan, Mexico**
Date: Thursday, September 22, 2022 11:12:50 AM
Attachments: image001.png
image002.png
image003.png

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maybe another psa

Officer Ricky Arias
Santa Maria Police Department
Work: (805) 928-3781 ext. 1187
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Email: RArias@cityofsantamaria.org

From: David Shea <dcshea@fbi.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 10:02 PM
To: Ricardo Arias <rarias@cityofsantamaria.org>
Subject: Fwd: **RESOLVED VKFR** Pedro Mezquita Novoa**Michoacan, Mexico**

*** EXTERNAL EMAIL: Please use caution when opening links or attachments.***

FYSA

Subject: **RESOLVED VKFR** Pedro Mezquita Novoa**Michoacan, Mexico**

*** RESOLVED VKFR ***
Updated current situation. Victim was located by AKU at his mother's vacant house in Jiquilpan.
Thank you to everyone for their work on this case! It is greatly appreciated.
LA and/or MX, should anyone learn any additional details through a debriefing, please let us know.
LA – also let us know what the case number is once it is opened.

Please use this distribution list. Use "Reply All" for substantive updates ONLY. Reply directly to IVCU SSA Laura Lebo for additions and removals from this distribution list and provide additional points of contact as necessary.

CASE NUMBER: 256F-LA-NEW

VICTIM INFORMATION:
Victim: Pedro Mezquita Novoa (US LPR; DOB 1/12/1958 – 64 YOA)

DATE / TIME OF HOSTAGE TAKING (HT): sometime between 9/10/2022 and 9/12/2022
LOCATION OF HT: Michoacan, Mexico

INITIAL RANSOM DEMAND: $10,000 USD

CURRENT RANSOM DEMAND: **UNKNOWN, but asked for additional $$**
RANSOM PAID: $18,000 USD (10 deposits to different accounts and names to banks in Jiquilpan, Michoacan)

LAST CONTACT W/HT: 9/14/2022, unknown time
DATE OF PROOF OF LIFE (POL): unknown date, but family has spoken to victim on the phone

TELEPHONE NUMBERS:
Victim: Pedro Mezquita Novoa, 353-102-9667
TPI: Janet Amezquita (victim's daughter in Santa Maria, CA), 805-631-3721 or 805-266-9515
HT: Unknown Name, 353-231-1912 and 353-231-2002

CURRENT SITUATION:
9/15/2022, 2:04PM, LA Case Agent, SA David Shea provided the following information:
The family just reported that AKU located the victim at the victim's mother's vacant house in Jiquilpan.
BACKGROUND:
9/15/2022, 11:52AM, MX ALAT Marco Acevedo provided the following information:
As of 11:45AM, the Michoacan AKU informed the victim has not yet been located. The AKU has not received any updates from Jalisco regarding search operations being conducted to locate the victim. However, Jalisco officials had informed AKU they were going to check all hotels in the area of Jiquilpan de Juarez, Jalisco.
The AKU is also trying to obtain updated telephonic information from the victim's phone carrier to produce leads and assist Jalisco in the search.
Legat MX City will continue coordinating with AKU and Jalisco officials.
9/15/2022, 7:12AM, LA Case Agent, SA David Shea provided the following information:
The original ransom demand was $10,000 USD. The family paid $8,000 USD fairly quickly. Then the ransom demand increased by the HTs due to the victim's actions during the kidnapping. The victim allegedly had a gun in his truck and lied to the HTs.

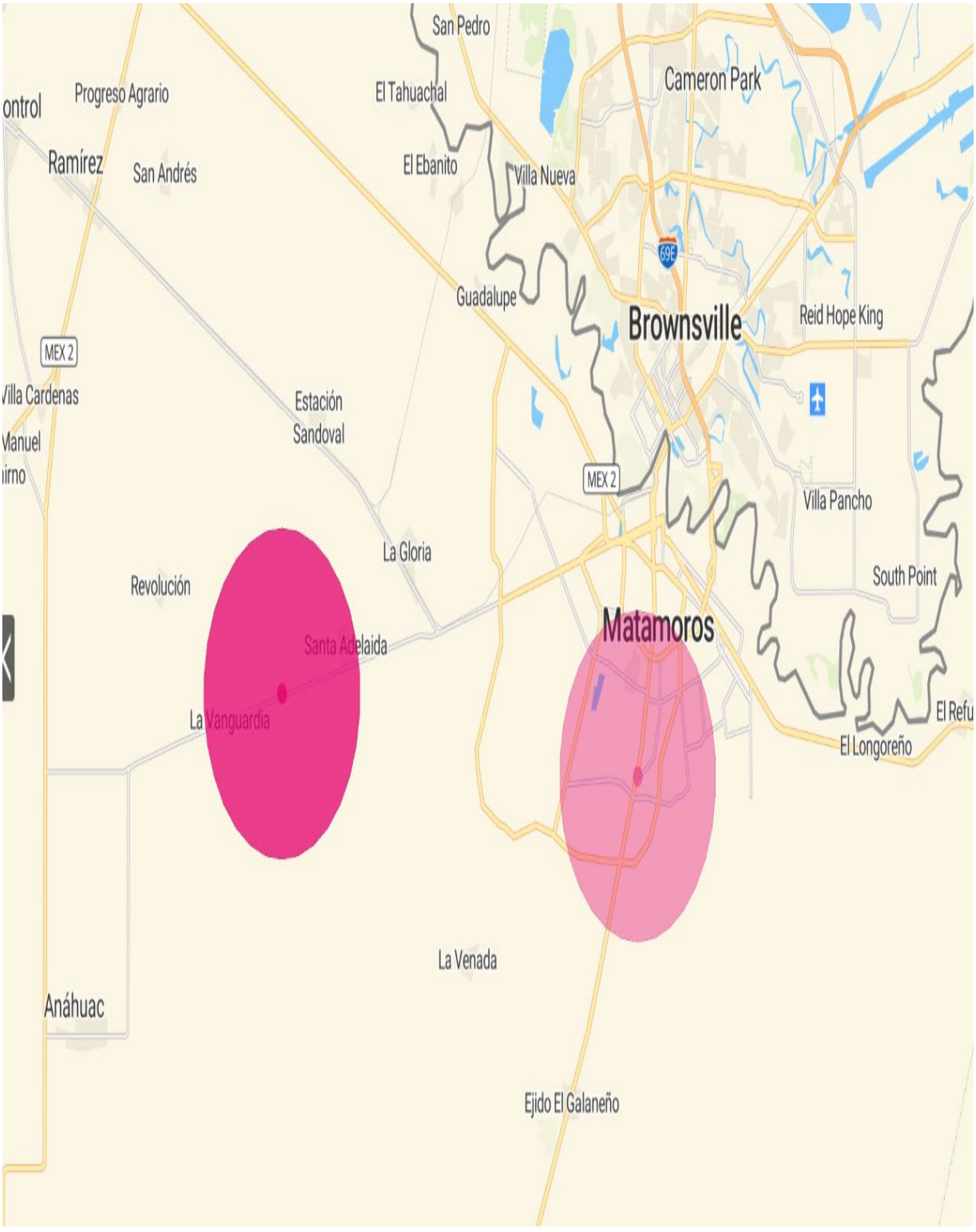
The family paid a total of $18,000 USD at this time. The case agent will obtain a list of all transactions and account numbers later today. The HTs are asking for more money. The family was initially delaying additional payment to the HTs, but since speaking with ALAT Acevedo and AKU, they have ceased communications with the HTs.

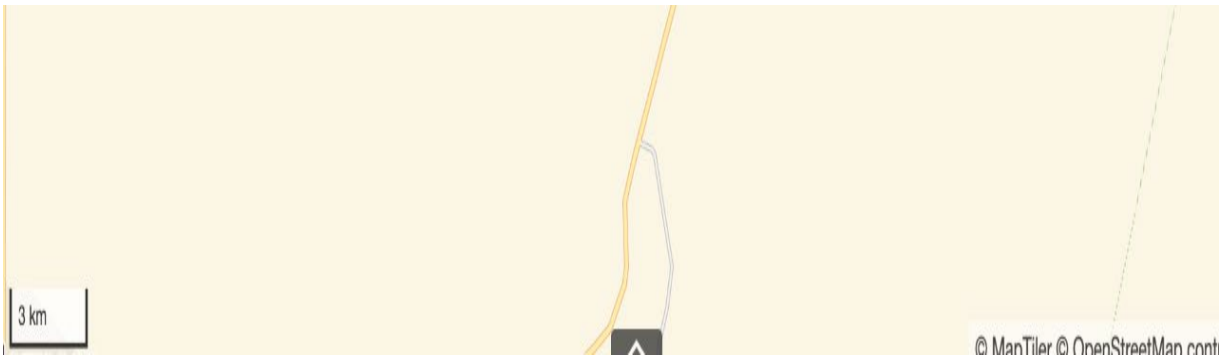
9/15/2022, 3:04AM, LA Case Agent, SA David Shea provided the following information:
The family was interviewed. The family started receiving calls from an HT on 9/12/2022. The first payment was made the same day. The victim was last seen by friends in Jiquilpan on 9/10/2022. The victim drives a late 1980's blue Nissan pick-up truck. The truck was located in the city of Jiquilpan by friends of the victim. Friends/relatives of the victim in Jiquilpan have observed AKU searching hotels for the victim.

9/15/2022, 12:42AM, MX ALAT Marco Acevedo provided the following information:
AKU Michoacan informed Jiquilpan de Juarez is in the state of Jalisco. Therefore, AKU Michoacan requested assistance from Jalisco in the search of the victim. Locals will be checking hotels/motels in

the area.

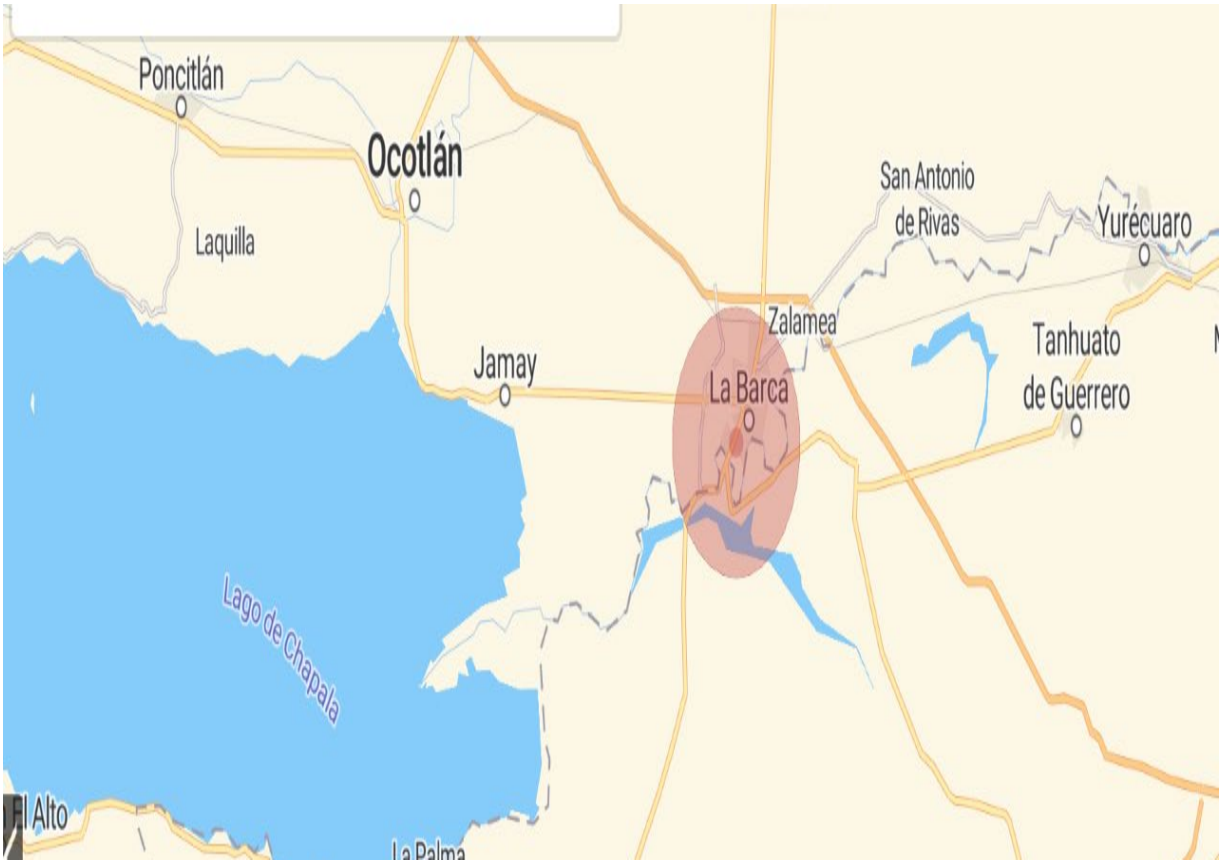
9/14/2022, 11:58PM, MX CAST ALAT Edwin Nam provided the following information:
Based on the records we have, both HT phones have only been active since 9/7/2022. They only used towers in Tamaulipas (under the big red circles). The west tower near Santa Adelaida is the one the HT1 phone pinged on.

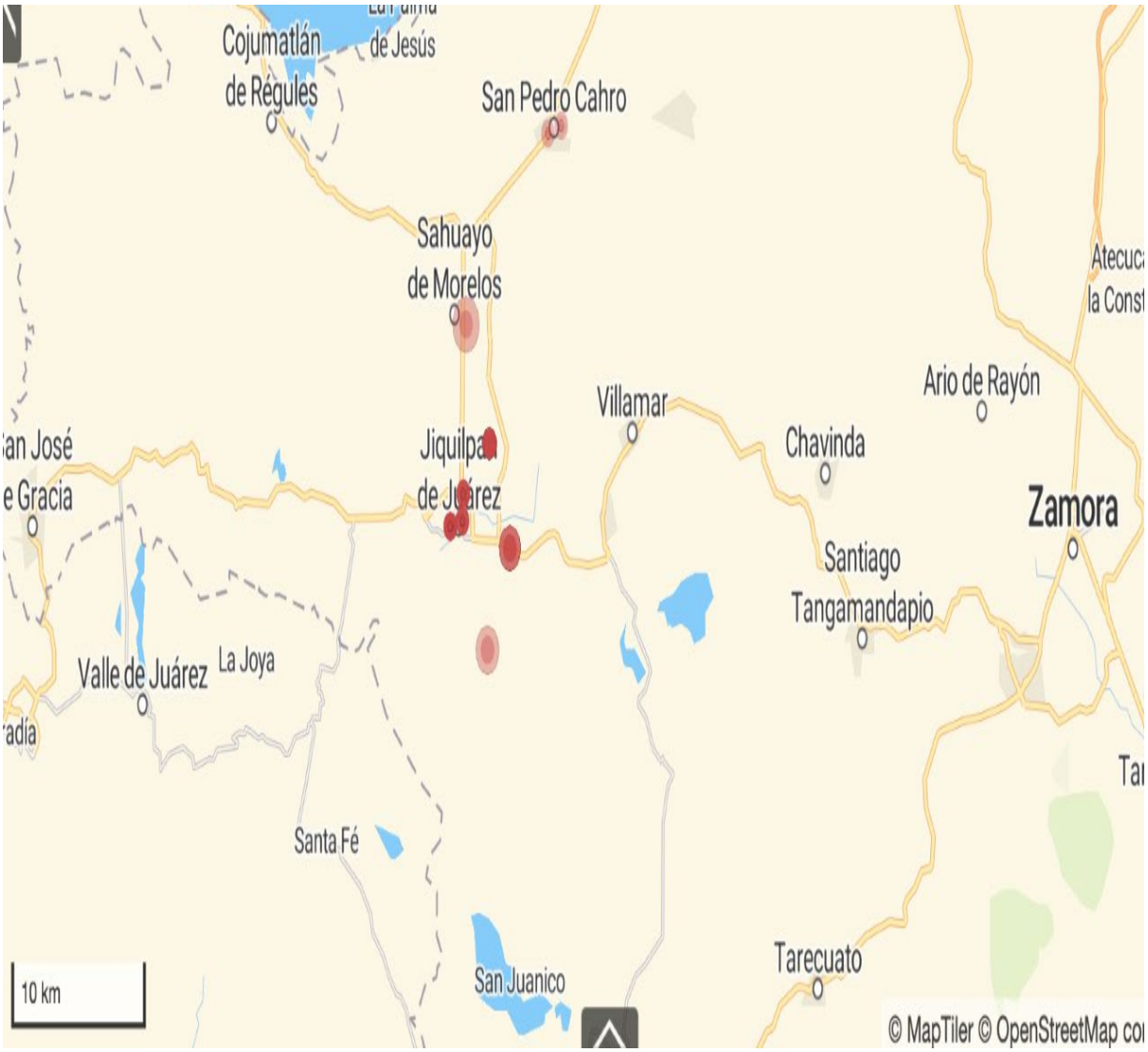




On the other hand, the victim phone has never been to Tamaulipas and is/was using towers in Michoacan as recently as 9/10/22 (the latest day MX CAST has records). The red circles to the right of the lake are the towers used.

Zoomed in view.





9/14/2022, 11:47PM, MX ALAT Marco Acevedo provided the following information:
AKU determined this incident is likely a virtual KFR and have instructed the TPI to stop communications with HTs and to not send anymore money.
AKU requested locals from Jiquilpan, Michoacan, to start attempting to locate the victim. The issue is that the victim's phone is turned off. AKU will provide any updates.

9/14/2022, 10:36PM, MX ALAT Marco Acevedo provided the following information:
Victim went missing on 9/9/2022. TPIC wired victim $300 USD on that day because victim changed a piece of land to TPI's name that day. Later on 9/9/2022, TPI started receiving ransom demands from two numbers (353-231-1912 and 353-231-2002). So far, the family has made 10 deposits to different accounts and names to banks in Jiquilpan, Michoacan, totaling $20,000 USD. TPI has receipts for all deposits.

Family has spoken with victim on the phone, but HTs have not sent family any photographs of victim.

The victim lives on a ranch in Michoacan, Mexico. Family went to the victim's house, which was left unattended with doors open, etc.

ACS has advised the family not to send any more money, as this appears to be a virtual KFR.

ACTIONS:

- FBI LA to open 256F case, provide file number, continue logical investigation, and provide updates.
- Negotiators, CAST, and Victim Services assist as necessary.
- Legat Mexico City coordinate with the Mexican Anti-Kidnapping Unit (AKU) and provide updates.
- FBI LA, Legat Mexico City, CNU, CAST, SOD, DOS, VSD, IOD, and IVCU engaged.

POINTS OF CONTACT:
ALAT: Marco Acevedo
LA SSA: Charles Kincaid
LA Case Agent: David Shea
LA CN: **TBD**
LA CNC: Kirsten Reneau
LA CAST: Sean Hansen
LA VS: Rebecca Archer
CNU: Angela Pennington
IVCU: Laura Lebo
IOD: Fernando Uribe/James Kelley
CAST: Jennifer Banks
SOD: Jerry Johnson & Barbara Apollony
DOS: Michael Posillico
VSD: LeiLani Hamilton

Thank you,
SSA Laura Lebo
CID-VCS-ICSJU-International Violent Crime Program
Cell: 419.779.8245